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Publisher: [Eric Olsen](#)

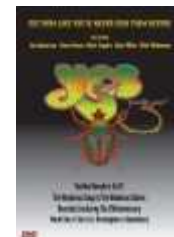
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## REVIEW

# Music DVD Review: Yes - *The Director's Cut*

Written by [Mike Newman](#)

Published November 09, 2008



On the same day that the phrase "Yes We Can" became the United States' official new governing philosophy, *the* premier progressive rock band of all time, Yes, kicked off their *In The Present* 40th Anniversary tour...with at least one big *but*.

Due to some respiratory health problems that have plagued long-time Yes vocalist and spiritual leader, Jon Anderson, the band has replaced him for this tour with Canadian Yes tribute band singer, Benoit David. And the smaller *but* is that keyboardist, Rick Wakeman, who has always been a little flighty anyway, has been replaced by his son, Oliver. The band is rounded out by Yes mainstays Steve Howe (guitar), Chris Squire (bass) and Alan White (drums).

Replacing Anderson has been [more than controversial](#) to Yes die-hards (including this writer) and even to [Anderson himself](#), but reports from early *In The Present* gigs are very positive and Benoit David really does nail Anderson's vocals perfectly (perhaps too perfectly). Even so, many fans still won't be rushing out to buy Yes concert tickets until Anderson is back in the fold.

And to bide time until that happens, those skeptics can turn to *Yes - The Director's Cut* from [MVD Visual](#). Recorded during Yes' 35th Anniversary Tour in 2003, it features two full-length concert performances from the band's classic line-up (Anderson, Wakeman, Howe, Squire, White) in Birmingham, England and at the Glastonbury Festival.

This DVD edition sets out to appease fans who were a little less than pleased with the editing, narration, and interview clips (during songs) of the original tour document, *Yesspeak*. And it succeeds greatly. There is a great venue vibe contrast from show to show, as the first DVD is indoors and the second is outdoors, at Glastonbury. And although the set lists are quite similar, fans will love the two equally-amazing takes of the 15-minute plus masterpiece epic, "Awaken," from the 1977 album, *Going For The One*. This Yes fan certainly did.

Evident from both performances, these guys are some of the best players in the business and are all still at the top of their game. It seems like Yes really shines brightest (and the fans are most satisfied) when playing deeper cuts like "Don't Kill The Whale," "South Side of the Sky," "To Be Over" and the aforementioned "Awaken." They are most certainly highlights of this DVD set.

The only times the shows sag a bit are during the Yes super-hits, which the band sometimes seem to sleepwalk through. On that note, here's hoping that we'll get to see a Yes - Deep Cuts tour where the band abandons the usual must-play hits and treats longtime fans to rarer selections — Are you reading this, Yes? — when Anderson returns for their 41st year.

Until then, though, dig into the excellent 4 hours-plus footage of *Yes - The Director's Cut* and send out your good vibes to Jon Anderson in regaining his health.

Mike lives in Brooklyn and is Associate Producer and Segment Writer for Alice Cooper's syndicated classic rock radio show, *Nights With Alice Cooper*, and writes music pieces for several blogs, including his own NewmRadio, Blog Critics, Ronebreak and the *Nights With Alice Cooper* blog. Mike also digs photography and playing guitar.

## Comments

#1 – November 13, 2008 @ 13:02PM – franklyn

nice! best wishes to good jon.